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FRANK PUTNAM

MEMORIES
AND
IMPRESSIONS

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CHICAGO, 1896

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Chicago

ADVERTISEMENT.

These unpretentious verses have been selected from among those which the writer has contributed to The Chicago Times-Herald during the years 1895 and 1896.

This book is published privately. Three hundred copies are printed, of which this volume is No. 300

Frank Putnam

Chicago, September 25, 1896.

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DEDICATION.

No smug and slicked-up poet I,
 Equipped with style and phrase euphonious,
Toward every soul that passes by
 Salaaming stiff and ceremonious;

But just a plain and hearty kind,
 Of Irish, Scotch and Yankee breeding;
Too much, perhaps, to mirth inclined,
 Since worldly goods I'm sadly needing.

But yet, though through this vale of tears
 I blindly grope and frequent stumble,
I see what good in all appears
 And entertain no wish to grumble.

If aught of mine has reached your heart,
 Or bears for you a pleasant seeming,
Across the leagues we sit apart
 Imagine me as mildly beaming;

At my left hand a flagon clear,
 Above my pipe blue spirals curling,
Old Homer here to crown my cheer
 With tales that start the red blood whirling.

Your hand of friendship I receive
 And gladly place my own before you,
Beseeching Care to take her leave
 And let life's years pass lightly o'er you.

TO JEAN NICOT, THE SMOKER'S SAINT.

"It is somewhat odd that none of the long list of smoking poets has sung the praises of Jean Nicot, the French diplomat, for whom was named Nicotiana, the weed of great delight."—(Times-Herald.)

Illustrious Sir, whom the All-Seer
 Located back in earlier ages,
 To you I bow in reverence here,
 Thou first among my favorite sages.

Earth's rule, I know, is to forget
 (If truth hath come from her detractors)
 The useful sons of men; and yet
 You rank among her benefactors.

And can it be that vandal Time,
 Whose ruthless hands ne'er know inaction,
 Shall ever lessen the sublime
 Delights of your dear benefaction?

Ah! no, sweet Sir! then rest at peace
 In whatsoever tomb they laid you.
 With splendid fame (since your release)
 A grateful world hath well repaid you.

Wherever comrades share their wine;
 Where sits the scholar, meditating;
 Where sailors rove the rolling brine;
 Where students drink their beer, debating;

Where lightly treads the wily scout,
 Alert against whatever ill be;
 Where soldiers pace the grim redoubt—
 Your name is loved and ever will be.

Oft at the time eve's gray enshrouds
 In somber garb the quiet hours,
 Have I, up through the fleecy clouds,
 Seen Florist Fancy's fairest flowers.

Your health, good sir, I gladly pledge
 In this long, fragrant, moist Havana,
 And my true faith to you allege,
 Whose name adorns nicotiana.

* * * * *

What mockery's in that "long, moist" weed!
 You understand, Jean, I was joking;
 A corn-cob pipe's about my speed
 Whenever I'm inclined to smoking.

But even so, shall none give praise
 Where due? If yes, what purse-proud puffer
 Could do the trick? Ah! duty lays
 That task on some poor rhyming duffer.

So runs the world. The few may eat
 Of pleasure's substance, but the many
 Must think joy's shadow's shadow sweet
 And buy it with their pauper's penny.

The rhymers' task is to deceive
 By painting want in pleasing colors;
 To filch the grief from them that grieve
 And rob dull life of half its dolours;

To make the husk seem golden grain;
 Inspire the roofless wretch with sorrow

That others out in misery's rain
 Share not his hope of happy morrow.

* * * * *

Long years have flown since you lay down,
 Quitting nicotiana sadly,
 But never singer wove thee crown,
 Where many should have wrought it gladly

Let then this tribute, rude but warm,
 Unworthy of its inspiration,
 Claiming no grace of thought or form,
 Receive thy *friendly* commendation.

And let me add, ere farewell's said,
 The ills you had you bravely bore 'em;
 So I'll fling naught at Fortune's head,
 But smoke my pipes and thank God for 'em.

A TRUCE TO THE BATTLE.

As the righteous God is a loving God,
 So the righteous man is a loving man;
 And whether he ride or run or plod,
 He follows the path that the Master trod
 And he lives by the Master's plan.

The world is narrow for all that throng
 Hungrily over its hills and plains;
 And ever its prizes adorn the strong,
 As often—too often—imperious Wrong
 Seizes its rarest and fairest gains.

The weak abide in the huts of want.
 God, we inform them, will hear their cry;
 The Father will banish the grey and gaunt
 Specter of Woe from its ancient haunt
 Some time, surely, before they die.

And then we hastily turn away,
 Eagerly seeking the phantom Gold;
 Their griefs forgotten as, day by day,
 We ardently struggle to make that prey
 Which each may capture but none can hold.

What wonder that down in the cellars dim
 And up in the pitiful garrets bare,
 The hates of the millions gather grim
 When hunger gnaws at each weary limb
 And prayers expire on the empty air?

A truce to the battle, if only an hour;
Let living and loving one purpose find!
The children, robbed of their dearest dower,
Are shackled in sight of the sacred tower—
Be kind to His loved ones as Christ was kind.

GOOD COMPANY ALL.

On the walls of my room, in confusing disorder,
Famous thinkers and drinkers hang border to border.

Dreamy Wordsworth, perhaps, worldly inerriment learns
From the mischievous eyes of his vis-a-vis, Burns;

While the latter, find father, is dandling the wean
That has toddled across from its mother, fair Jean.

Alfred Tennyson listens while Newton discourses
His opinion of earth and its natural forces.

To the left Browning furtively quakes in his cloak
Lest his neighbor, 'Gene Field, play a practical joke.

Just beyond them John Wesley, with iron-clad chin,
Is rebuking Boccaccio's quizzical grin.

But the devil a bit does Boccaccio care;
As he sits on the outermost edge of his chair,

He's apparently planning a sociable call
On a picturesque girl in the opposite wall.

Just below where great Lincoln and Sherman abide,
With old England's own Gladstone erect at their side,

Julius Cæsar the King and Pope Boniface stare
At each other all day through the smoke-laden air.

* * * * * * * * *

Whether soldier or priest did the more for his race
We need hardly inquire, since each in his place

Was an instrument ruled by the Maker of man,
And but played his brief part in the infinite plan.

Whether singer or mighty philosopher more
Of the manifold woes of his species upbore,—

Which, in passing, let most for our benefit fall,
It were rudeness to ask, since the Gods gave them all.

THE BETTER PART.

Worldly gear is yours,
 Its pleasures I resign;
Heavenly joy's my share,
 With Mary's hands in mine.

Threadbare is my coat—
 Its empty pockets flout me!
Still do I rejoice
 With Mary's arms about me.

The man to men unknown
 Their notice never misses;
He finds a sweet reward
 In bonny Mary's kisses.

The great from all their gold
 Grim Death will shortly sever;
But Mary's love is mine
 Forever and forever.

THE CORONATION.

The great of all nations watched with awe
 The lord of the vast white empire crowned
 Ruler of destiny, fount of law;
 Unnumbered ghosts from the frozen ground
 Afar to the north came sweeping down
 And heaped their curses on king and crown.

Invisible they to the blinded eyes
 Of the mighty host in the kingly hall,
 But some there were who could see them rise
 And hear them wildly for vengeance call;
 For these were leaders in freedom's van,
 Who went to death for their fellow man.

Ah! nameless heroes in unmarked graves,
 Men may forget you, but never God!
 To every mortal that sternly braves
 For a people's freedom a tyrant's rod,
 He giveth to see, in His own good time,
 Punishment fitted to every crime;

Justice exalted; the despot hurled
 Headlong down from his blood-stained throne;
 Liberty's glorious flag unfurled;
 The sovereign people come to their own;
 Virtue and plenty on every hand;
 A happy race in a fruitful land.

The way is far and the time is long—
 How long may none but the Father know;

Yet right in the end will subdue the wrong,
For the years that steadily onward flow
Bear nations, as men, to the perfect day
When Love shall command and the world obey.
1896.

OLD JOURNEYMAN DAYS.

Those days were the days when a cooper knew
 He was more than a cog in a wheel;
 Then he merrily traveled the country through,
 And he flaunted the rose but never the rue,
 As the shops had plenty for all to do
 Wherever we made appeal.
 His wage was good and his arm was strong,
 And his soul was free from care;
 So he sang at his toil the whole day long,
 The happiest heart in a rollicking throng,
 And finding the whole world fair.

And on Saturday night,
 With the lasses bright,
 And the glasses clinking gay,
 The hours sped by
 Till the dawn drew nigh
 Ere he sought the homeward way—
 The dawn drew nigh
 In the eastern sky
 Ere he homeward bent his way.

He had no wife and he had no child,
 Nor never a home for long;
 And the Parson told him his course was wild—
 That his age would taste like a stream defiled
 If he wandered on as a fool beguiled
 By the voices of drink and song.
 But his years were few and his blood was hot,
 And the lasses were fair and kind;

So he heard the Parson but heeded him not;
And I venture to say that he clean forgot
The good man's praise of the pious lot
And the joys of a holy mind.

For on Saturday night,
With the lasses bright,
And the glasses clinking gay,
The hours sped by
Till the dawn drew nigh
Ere he sought the homeward way—
The dawn drew nigh
In the eastern sky
Ere he homeward bent his way.

THE OLD WORLD.

Unnumbered soldiers load their guns,
And stack them handy by;
Five hundred million cringing clods
For bare existence cry;
A hundred royal rulers drain
Their peoples' purses dry.

Lo, Greed and Hate march side by side
Beneath the flag of Lust;
The sword of war is burnished bright,
The spade resigned to rust;
While all the nobler arts of man
Lie prostrate in the dust.

Higher the serf shall sorely climb
To work his own release;
Then prayer and song shall celebrate
The monster War's decease,
And glad mankind at last abide
In universal peace.

TO A BOYHOOD FRIEND.

Lamb's gossip stands neglected by;
The blaze leaps cheerily up the log,
Whiles on my cozy couch I lie
And think upon thee, dear old dog.

Dost thou recall, in that far place
Where long time since we laid thee down,
The stately walk,—the madcap race,—
Thy too-fantastic dressing gown?

And dost thou still with relish think
Upon thy sober-comic pranks—
How thou didst smoke, with knowing blink,
Erect upon thy shaggy shanks?

Methinks that sometimes in the spring,
When apple-blossoms deck thy bed,
Their blooms fine memories to thee bring
Of woodland ways we loved to tread.

And thou dost spy once more with me
The dainty bluebells where they hide
Beneath the giant oaken tree,
With fragrant cowslips close beside;

And haply, when the summer's heat
Hath warmed the placid river through,
In vagrant fancy dost repeat
The merry games I taught to you.

How well must thou recall the day
The waters closed above my head,

And thou didst fetch me safe away,
 As one recaptured from the dead.

Thou dost remember, dost thou not,
 Our some-time playmate, little Jim?
 Dear laddie!—I have not forgot—
 With thoughts of thee mine eyes grow dim.

Thou, too art resting from thy play;
 A deep and peaceful sleep is thine.
 I plod along the homeward way
 And do not murmur nor repine.

But sometimes, whiles I dimly pore
 Beneath the lamp's benignant beam
 Some favorite bit of bookish lore,
 I pause to nod—and doze—and dream.

My narrow cell becomes a wide
 And lovely room; two children fair
 Smile up to me from either side
 As if they had been always there.

And then you come upon my view,
 As years ago you bounding came;
 Thy deep-toned voice the voice I knew,
 Thy quick and eager eyes the same.

I stroke thy head that thou dost lay
 With fond assurance on my knee. * * *
 Before me little Jim doth play,
 A child through all eternity.

'Then cometh one of angel grace;
At her white throat a jewel gleams;
Her beauty doth illumine the place—
The saintly lady of my dreams.

* * * * *

Thus let me dream, nor not awake,
So happy I in dreamland be,
Where care is lost in Lethe's lake
And visions fair encompass me.

LEARN TO LABOR AND WAIT.

For the lessons of life
They are many and stern;
And the hardest to learn
Is not masterful strife
For a king or a state;
It is only—to wait.

Youth is eager to start
On life's ocean alone
Ere his strength be full-grown;
And through Age from his heart
May of perils inform,
Still he thirsts for the storm.

If his courage be high,
He may struggle along
And by sorrow grow strong;
And the years, as they fly,
May allot him life's prize
On this side of the skies.

But the many that strive
For the laurels must fail;
And full many a sail
At Death's port shall arrive,
That could enter Joy's gate
Would its master but wait.

RESPONSIBILITY.

God sees, but His children are blind;
 They incessantly strive for the mire
 That they tread on. The gems of the mind
 Of Creation few mortals desire.

God hears, but His children, aflame
 With a lust for the gauds that men flaunt,
 Succor not babes that cry in His name
 And expire in the anguish of want.

God loves! of His goodness we live!
 But His children, ungrateful and cold,
 Ignoring His mandate to give—
 Defying what time shall unfold,—

They dare to abide at their ease
 In the midst of the gathering roar,
 Like the thunder on storm-troubled seas,
 Of the hungry that beat at their door.

God loves! yet the blasphemous dare
 To assert He created the Few
 To ascend on the Many; they swear
 That the talons the strongest imbrue

In the blood of the weak, but obey
 His command—that the race shall arise
 In the lives of the Few on a way
 That is paved with the Poor they despise.

* * * * *

He knows, and we may not possess
 The key to His infinite grace;
Yet we feel that the men who transgress
 The commands which He gave to the race—

To love, to forgive and be kind,
 To share with the lowly the bread
That His goodness has taught us to find—
 Shall confront Him with trembling and dread;

With a burden of guilt on the soul
 Too vast for repentance to mend. * * *
On the Master of Equity's scroll
 Each must balance accounts in the end.

THE THREE GIFTS.

We thank Thee, Lord, for Thy first gift, Life;
 Precious the privilege, living to see
 The race arising to peace through strife,
 Merciful, generous, chivalrous, free.

Not yet, we know, have Thy children grown
 Into the brotherhood Heaven hath planned;
 But Thou wilt garner where Thou hast sown
 Plentiful harvests in every land.

We thank Thee, Lord, for life's dearest prize,
 Love that abideth while life abides;
 That lightens the way to the distant skies,
 Guiding us fairly whate'er betides.

Love hath its sorrows, we know, as deep
 As its fountains of joy where we drink at will;
 Yet love lives on past the dreamless sleep
 Of the dear ones out on the quiet hill.

We thank Thee, Lord, for Thy last gift, Death,
 Making for all of our ills amends;
 That gently severs the fainting breath,
 Giving us over again to our friends.

The grave is low and a darksome room,
 Yet shall we enter with never a fear;
 And rest at peace in its rayless gloom,
 Knowing, O Father, that 'Thou art near.

ASPIRATION.

Ten thousand poets pipe their paltry lays;
 Empurpled panders prostitute the press,
 While sodden dullards cant of "old dead days"
 And paint a fearful future of distress.

Perverted "science" leads the weak from God;
 An individual greed promotes the thought
 That loyal love has perished from the sod
 Whereon our fathers human freedom wrought.

The sleek, insidious sophistry of towns
 Would sacrifice our honor to our trade;
 But far upon the plain the freeman frowns,
 As from his scabbard springs his stubborn blade.

My country! Still God's mighty will inspires
 The patriot faith that has no feeble fears,
 Still lights on humble hearths the holy fires
 That made and saved this land in other years.

The race advances—Destiny impels;
 Through drowsy peace and war's baptismal fire,
 One lesson Time in glowing letters spells:
 "On! Sons of God—to nobler heights aspire!"

MAKING HIS PILE.

"Early and late he is working—
 Says that's his natural style;
 He wasn't cut out right for shirking,
 And they say he is making his pile."

"Married, of course," I suggested,
 "With babies to climb on his knee?"

"No; too many dollars invested—
 He's never had leisure, you see."

"No hand for sports—isn't active;
 And ask him to go to the play,
 And he'll say it's mighty attractive,—
 He'd be glad to—on some other day."

"And suppose you suggest that he's losing
 The joys that make living worth while;
 He declares your ideas are amusing
 And asks: 'Ain't I making my pile?"

"No wife to dispute my dominion,
 No children to go the bad;
 Give me cash, in my humble opinion,
 The best friend a man ever had."

"If you speak of the pleasures of giving,
 He puts on a cynical smile,
 And remarks that 'you'll learn more by living.'
 Poor fool!—but he's making his pile."

A NEW STAR IN THE FLAG.

I.

Strange people, these Mormons that were;
Caught up in the folds of Smith's faith,
The starvelings of Europe's big towns
Came over by ship loads, like sheep;
Recruits left lean farms where the soil
But barely supported men's lives.
A few came with money, and some
Who had culture exceeding their wit;
Yet others foresaw in the church
The means of advancing their fame.
These were led—these and others—by men
Who saw with fanatic fore-vision
An empire built in the west—
Themselves as its masters supreme.

II.

They journeyed past rivers and plains;
They climbed the dark mountains and filed
Through the passes the Indians knew.
God had frowned on the land where they stopped;
It parched under harrowing suns.
The sage brush and grease wood were there,
And the cactus snarled up from the sand,
But men couldn't live there—till then.
These Mormons, however, were stern;
They watered the plains with the snows
That melted and ran from the ranges.
They plowed, and they planted—and prayed;

And they reaped, for the soil teemed with gold
That needed but water to fuse.

III .

More came across seas, and their priests
Made converts throughout all our east.
Polygamy peopled the plain, and its masters
Grew proud. And pride ever was blind.
They builded on ignorant hope,
On vain superstition and fraud,
On hunger, on fear and on lust.
They thought that the church could so weld
Its people together in time
That the ceaseless wave-beating without
Of a civilization more pure
Could never disintegrate them.

IV.

Monogamists saw that the land
The Mormons had settled was good.
They entered thereon and they dropped
In the ripening soil of the minds
Of the children of Mormons the seed
Of a higher spiritual life.
What's the fruit of it all? Well, to-day
This land that the Mormons reclaimed
Comes into the Union—a state—
A sister to Maine and Montana,
To Delaware, Texas, Ohio—
Well worthy the welcome they give.
Polygamy skulks in the rear,

Disowned by the best of its sons,—
Disowned by the church that it built!

V.

Time's alchemy baffles the wisest,
Here's good sprung from evil direct.
What good? Well, a desert made green;
A tribe of good men come to life
From the loins of polygamous sires;
A new star in the flag; a new step
To the ultimate union in one
Of all hopes of this nation of ours.
You, there, in the senate and house,
Give the members from Utah your hands.

1895.

THE CREED OF TOIL.

To-day is your day, not the day that is past;
To-morrow's a day that has yet to be born.
Toil earnestly, then, for the hours fly fast
From the morn.

You have never a minute for idle despite,
Nor a second to childishly grieve;
Lay hold, and success crown your toil with delight
In the eve.

Life is brief at the best, and its aim is not clear,
But spend it so well that, whatever impend,
You'll have naught for repenting and never a fear
At the end.

TO HOPE AND NOT TO MOURN.

To-day the poor kneel low beside
The grave where Burns reposes,—
Pray as they kneel, all misty-eyed,
To strew the mound with roses,
That always, in the peaceful land
Life's losses purchase after,
Their bard may wander hand in hand
With gracious Love and Laughter.
Ah! Robbie, could you but have known,
Ere daisies bloomed above you,
How, when a hundred years had flown
The hearts of men would love you,—
Had you but known ere, grief-arrayed,
Your spirit sought its bourne,
You might have felt that man was made
To hope and not to mourn.

July 21, 1898, 100th anniversary of the poet's death.

WITH MARY BY THE CEDAR'S SIDE.

Wee singers in the rural shade
 Made glad the country far and wide;
 The woods their sweetest blooms displayed,
 What dreamy hours I fondly strayed
 With Mary by the Cedar's side.

Sage Lydia ruled the floral jaunt
 But seldom closed her broken ranks;
 Her power she had no wish to vaunt;
 So I found oft a cozy haunt
 With Mary by the Cedar's banks.

Though sober comrades all designed—
 Stern bent on learning Flora's arts—
 To make each flower that they might find
 An added treasure of the mind,
 To me all buds were Cupid's darts.

Old Cedar, childhood's friend and guide,
 Safe confidant of boyhood's dreams,
 Glad witness of the lover's pride—
 Long years may sweethearts stroll beside
 Your beauteous borders, queen of streams.

GHOSTS.

Few ghosts would haunt the soul's dim shelves
Were men but honest with themselves.

REFORM.

Mankind could save one-half its wasted labor
Would each but heal himself and spare his neighbor.

A CLASSIC.

'Tis a record of olden-time dreamings or deeds
That each one of us owns and that nobody reads.

THREE LIVES.

Dives, racked with pain and driving down the street,
Passed close beside a digger in the ditch.
"Alas!" he thought, "had I his rugged strength
And naught beside, still would I deem me rich."

The digger, pausing, gazed with envious eye
Upon the passing mockery of health,
And, frowning, thought, "How gladly would I change
My strength and want for his disease and wealth."

The sick man died. The digger, through the years,
Had scanty portion of the world's delight.
Each least desired the treasure that he held,
And each, unhappy, passed from mortal sight.

Within a tiny cottage by the way
A bent and gray-haired woman made abode.
Nor strength nor riches had she, yet she found
A means to lighten oft a neighbor's load.

Where sickness came to deepen want's degree
Of misery, she also came to cheer;
And when she patient toiled among the poor,
They felt that God's own minister was near.

So laboring, praying, helping to the end,
In her last moments healing others' fears,
She sank, serenely happy, to her rest,
Pearl-crowned by humble neighbors' honest tears.

THE POEMS 'THAT NOBODY WRITES.

O, many and fair in the work-a-day grind
Are the songs that the generous hearts shall find;
And oft shall they garner the dear delights
Of the beautiful poems that nobody writes.

The grip of the hand to the man who is down,
That encourages hope 'neath Adversity's frown;
The patient endeavor to balance a wrong
That a brother endures—each one is a song.

The flower bestowed on a giftless child;
The word of defense for a wretch reviled;
The charity given where Want invites—
All these are the poems that nobody writes.

THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

Within the hour, when, borne before my door,
With shadowed sight I view the heavens o'er,

My spirit, singing, parts the feeble bars
To mount triumphant 'mong the glorious stars;

There, from the topmost planet, looks around
On mighty worlds that men have never found;

Then, earthward called, from his exalted place
Peers dimly down through ever-lengthening space,

Until at last his native globe appears—
A far, small star amid the grander spheres;

Still gazing, sees his comrade bowed in pain
And sadly hastes to leave the heavenly plain.

My mortal frame, endure the common lot—
To live, to toil, to die and be forgot;

But O, my spirit, yoked to mortal ill,
Have you no nobler mission to fulfill?

Has He ordained a life of fear and doubt,
A final gasp and utter blotting out?

The spirit buried at the body's side,
All wishes unfulfilled, all hopes denied?

It cannot be. What sorrows here assail
Will vanish when the future lifts death's veil;

And past the grave, while countless ages roll,
Eternal God, wilt Thou sustain my soul!

THE FRIENDS OF CHILDHOOD.

Willing sacrifice, sympathy, pleasure—all blend
With the magic of love in the gentle word friend.

The friends of old age are not many; 'tis fate
That though many come early, but few remain late.

Other ties take the place of the first in the heart,
And the friends, half unconsciously, wander apart.

Yet the few that are steadfast you feel you can trust
Until day dawns no more and the dust turns to dust.

But the friendships of childhood are rich and as pure
As the best that the future shall prove to be su

The birds that are nesting in yonder low tree,
They call my wee laddie away from my knee;

And, as oft as he seeks them, through all the day long,
They pledge him their love in the merriest song

His savage cloth dog, that by day finds delight
In putting his timid pet lambkins to flight—

This terrible beast, when the shadows creep down
From the skies in the east to envelop the town,

Stands guard at his pillow, a sentinel bold,
That a mischievous fairy would fear to behold.

Right well doth he know, as he sinks into sleep,
What a vigilant watch his protector will keep;

And the rubber doll cuddles up close in his arms,
Full sure they are safe from the fearful alarms

That sometimes arouse them, all trembling with fear,
In the thought that a hideous ogre is near.

For it happens, sometimes, that the dog runs away,
And he cometh not home at the close of the day.

Then my little one prays that his Lord will forefend
What dangers he fancies may threaten his friend;

While the fatherbird, snug in his nest in the thorn,
Stands guard for the fickle cloth dog till the morn.

Though sorrow will come, as it comes to us all,
It is sure that, whatever disasters befall—

Whatever of loss from his life may ensue,
These friends to the end will be faithful and true.

DESOLATION.

A rude log hut on a lonely hill,
 Snow on the north wind flying;
 Darkness within where a man lies still,
 And a woman sighing.

Night, but no stars. On the blizzard's blast
 Ride souls that have felt God's spurning,
 Hideous wraiths from the world's dead past
 For an hour returning.

They grapple the cabin on either side,
 Laughing and shrieking and twisting;
 The roof beams sullenly grumble, tried
 By the toil of resisting.

The watch dog starts from the floor to growl,
 The terrors of night defying.
 Away in the valley a lone wolf's howl
 And a nameless crying.

* * * * *

A rude log hut on a lonely hill,
 Deep sunk in the land-sea's foam;
 But Death steals in where the man lies still,
 And he gathers him home.

BALLAD OF COUNTRY TRAMPS.

We're Hungry Ike
And Weary Bill;
We never worked—
We never will.
The hedge our roof,
The sod's our cot;
An oyster can's
Our coffee pot.

We break our fast
At break o' day;
Then hoist our traps
And go our way.

We revel in
Fair nature's moods;
We're long on joys
If short on foods.

Our life is free—
We skip the towns;
No copper fierce
Upon us frowns.

We make no bluff
About hard times;
The '73
Or other crimes.

We do not claim
That we refrain
From work to save

Our fellows pain;
That jobs may fall
In other hands,
We but obey
The Lord's commands.

Man was not born
To toil and sweat;
We bow to fate
With no regret.
We're Hungry Ike
And Weary Bill
We never worked—
We never will.

THE RICH AND THE POOR.

The room was narrow and mean and bare
 Where the baby gasped for breath;
 The mother murmured a hopeless prayer
 That died in the hell of the blazing air
 For the fields of her girlhood, cool and fair,
 While the infant fought with Death.

A wee form lay on the ragged sheet
 That was wet with a mother's tears;
 But its white soul rose through the blinding heat
 That sank like a pall on the squalid street—
 Ah! Death took all that her heart held sweet
 And left her the lonely years.

O, you that in purple and silks abide,
 Had the babe no claim on you?
 Had the mother's prayer at her darling's side
 No power to pierce through the walls of pride?
 Do you owe no debt to the Man who died?
 Did He leave you naught to do?

Add not God's wrath to the human hates
 That fester in garrets dim;
 I tell you the rage of the ages waits
 And crouches low at your mansion gates;
 God's brotherhood only its thirst abates,—
 Go forth in the name of Him!

FISHING SONG.

(Brule is pronounced "Bruly.")

Come, boys, get down your dusty poles,
 Your reels and flies and lines;
 We're off to where the Brule rolls
 Among the northern pines—
 To where the sparkling Brule rolls
 Among the fragrant pines.

The ice is gone; the river flows
 Serenely on her way.
 (But whether south her current goes,
 Or north, I cannot say;
 I only knows the whiskey flows
 The old familiar way.)

Before our tent beside the stream
 We'll sit and smoke at eve;
 The nights shall pass with ne'er a dream,
 The days with naught to grieve—
 Clear nights whereon the pale moon's beam
 Shall linger loth to leave.

The fish? Alas! again must I
 Confess I know them not.
 Guides named them all when I was by,
 But I have clean forgot;
 (Or else the poteen held my eye
 So that I heard them not.)

Enough it is that I declare
 Earth has no fairer scene—

No joy not held in that crisp air
 Deep in the wildwood green,
Where gleams the Brule debonair,
 Her vineclad banks between.

So come, get down your fishing poles,
 Your patent reels and lines,
And we'll go where the Brule rolls
 Among the northern pines—
To where the sparkling Brule rolls
 Among the fragrant pines.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Two men went down to the sea in a ship,
 Flushed with the scarlet of drink and song;
 A ribald jest was on either's lip
 And their pulls at the bottle were deep and strong.

A storm arose and the vessel sank;
 The sea rejoiced in triumphant hate,
 And two fought death on a narrow plank
 That shivered and sank beneath their weight.

Then one cried out: "I must leave you, Jack;
 You have babes and a wife, but luckily I
 Have none who will mourn if I come not back;
 And one may live, but one *must* die."

"True," said the other, "my wife will wail;
 'Tis a coward deed, but I *must* live on." * * *
 Two hours later a passing sail
 Took up the one, but the other was gone.

The dull world cheers for the man who wins,
 And looks not under the sea or the sod;
 So it says of the one that "he died in his sins,"
 While the other "was saved by a loving God."

IN THE OTHER DAYS,

When hearts turn back to other days
 Where youth ran on in flowery ways,
 Tears blot the lines of Time's long scroll
 And silent sadness fills the soul.
 "The other days," when time was young,
 When gladness sang from every tongue—
 So fair a grace the vision wears
 That man forgets his present cares.
 Clearly before him doth arise
 A picture dear to boyish eyes;
 A slender girlish figure stands
 Welcoming him with open hands.
 Within her eyes a light there shines
 Whose meaning he but half divines;
 A reverent fear forbids the plea
 He longs to make on bended knee.
 Fate's hour flies. They lightly part,
 With sad-sweet yearning in each young heart—
 A dream, perhaps, of a distant land,
 Where two might wander, hand in hand.

The years that pass, to girl and boy,
 Bring equal measure of pain and joy;
 He out in the world at life's behest,
 She sheltered still in the old home nest.
 Widely apart lie the paths they took;
 Yet she, at home in her quiet nook
 Perchance, day-dreaming, may backward gaze
 To boyish homage of other days;

As oft, when the world frowns cold and grim,
And the prize he seeks seems far and dim,
The present fades and before his sight
She stands as fair as she stood that night.
Then time turns back and the fragrance rare
Of her garden sweetens the heavy air;
It beareth the penetrant, rich perfume
Of her crimson rose tree's royal bloom;
The day departs, night's shades descend,
Twilight and darkness subtly blend,
And the words he breathes are a prayer of praise
For a fleeting glimpse of the other days.

LOVE SONG.

The world's applause is a draught divine,
Its love is a precious prize;
But dearer than both are the vows that shine
In the deeps of my lassie's eyes—
Far dearer than all is the true-love sign
In the deeps of my lassie's eyes.

We twain stray on with but empty hands,
Yet our hearts with joy o'erflow;
The gold that the spirit of youth demands
Is affection's ardent glow—
O, youth, as ever, to-day demands
But affection's fervent glow.

What matter to me that far away
The wealth of the Indies lies?
A fig for it all! I'll watch the play
Of the light in my lassie's eyes—
I'll bow my head to the potent sway
Of the love in my lassie's eyes.

MY ANCIENT FRIEND DE FOE.

Long years have sped the days I read
Your daring deeds and bloody—
Since, safely hid behind the lid
Of what I seemed to study,
Your thrilling tale of storm and sail
Transfixed me with its wonders,
And brought to pass in every class
A startling train of blunders.
What cared I then which tribes of men
Put forth across the oceans?
On what pretext should I be vexed
With vain grammatic notions?
No teacher's gruff and curt rebuff
Had slightest power to phase me,
While Crusoe's skill and sturdy will
Continued to amaze me;
Until, alas! it comes to pass
That, just when Crusoe sighted
The foot-marked road where Friday strode,
The teacher's cane alighted.
No lightning stroke more swiftly broke,
Nor none more swiftly shattered;
With evil mind he stood behind
And stoutly whaled and battered.
And then he took that precious book—
O, grief all else transcending!—
With vile intent and fiercely rent
Its pages past all mending.

His savage glare so chilled the air,
 As spitefully he threw you
 In fragments by, that straightway I
 Made sure he never knew you.

Each year that flies doth emphasize
 The loyalty I bore you;
 Old Time's retreat but makes more sweet
 The pangs I suffered for you.

What else transcends the joy of friends
 Whose steadfast faith involves them
 In ceaseless fear of peril near
 From which time ne'er absolves them?

'Tis even so; whiles 'neath the glow
 Of evening's lamp I've shrined thee,
 Unconsciously I turn to see
 If he lurks not behind me.

Still do I dread his cat-like tread,
 His cane upraised to flay me;
 But still do you, as ever new,
 With plenteous meed repay me.

Wherefore, old friend, if chance shall send
 That teacher's soul before you,
 Forgive, I pray, the hasty way
 In which he one time tore you.

Consider, too, the patience due,
 And let no rage run through you;
 Nor be forgot his mournful lot
 In that he never knew you,

LOSSES AND GAINS.

Though God has veiled his purpose
 From our unseeing eyes,
 He bids us hope unceasing—
 The weakling as the wise.

He makes the glowing Future
 To blossom from the Now;
 Of ills He coineth blessings,
 Although we know not how.

And in the fiery furnace
 Of sorrow and of loss,
 His alchemy divorces
 True metal from the dross.

As who would scan with pleasure,
 The verdant vale's delights,
 Must first, with steps untiring,
 Ascend the mountain heights,

Mayhap to struggle onward,
 With bruised and bleeding feet,
 Ere half the weary journey
 Before him be complete,

So rises Man, the pilgrim,
 On lessons bought with pain,
 And learns there is no losing
 Without a greater gain.

IN THE ARMY BLUE.

A gray old man on a bench in the sun,
 The years of his pilgrimage almost done;
 Smoking and dreaming the long day through—
 A bent old man in the army blue.

A black boy leisurely saunters along,
 Merrily humming a vagrant song;
 Gazing betimes, with an eager eye,
 At bird or butterfly passing him by.

The lad rejoices, he knows not why,
 In bird and butterfly, earth and sky;
 No thought of the sorrowful past has he,
 Or present or future—he wanders free.

Away by the sea, where the nation's dead
 Await God's call in their last low bed,
 The cannons boom on this day of days,
 Solemnly voicing a nation's praise.

And far to the south, at a cottage door,
 With dimmed eyes scanning her treasures o'er—
 Letters and pictures, faded and old,—
 A mother mourns in her empty fold.

They erred, we know, in the light of the years,
 But justice yields to a mother's tears;
 So blest be the prayer she breathes this day
 For the boys who died in the rebel gray.

And he who sits on the bench in the sun,
 When taps are sounded and life is done,
May he dream fairly the long years through,
 Enfolded still in the army blue.
Memorial Day, 1896.

MORNING ALONG THE CEDAR.

Let the laurels be worn where the fates may allot 'em;
As I lie on the bloom-bordered banks of this stream,
Where the fish, like philosophers, sleep near the bottom,
'Tis the choicest of luxuries merely to dream.

Here the sod is as sweet as a flower queen's crown,
And as fragrant as hope in the heart of a child;
Here the wandering waters run murmuring down
And my soul is by vagabond fancy beguiled.

What's the worth of the world to a man who despises
Its contempt of the living, its praise of the dead?
Dearer far is the wood where the morning breeze rises,
And in cool benediction strays over my head.

A SONG OF A MOTHER.

Sometimes, when dusk creeps softly down
 From out the eastern sky,
 Weary of toil and sick at heart,
 I lay my labors by,

And fold my hands and close my eyes
 To sit and dimly dream,
 While all life's sorrows drift away
 On reverie's silent stream.

Then I am but a little boy
 Beside my mother's knee,
 Hearing again the old sweet songs
 That once she sang to me.

Happy the dreams wherein arise
 Dear visions of the past;
 Ah! dear, so dear that I could pray
 They might forever last—

That I might thus through all the years
 Her boyish lover be,
 And hear again the old sweet songs
 That mother sang to me.

Some time, perhaps, when life is done,
 We two once more shall know
 The pure delight that graced our days
 So very long ago;

Love's compensation shall atone
 For all the lonely years. * * * *
 To-night accept, O, mother mine,
 The tribute of my tears.

UNREST.

Love hath its tides;
The ship that rides
 Upon their ebb and flow
Is never blessed
With perfect rest,
 But swings—now high—now low.

Life hath its cares,
And whoso bears
 The burden of its years,
Until the end
Must hourly blend
 Its laughter with its tears.

A DREAM IN THE DUSK.

On the bank of a lake is a little green cot
Where the ivy creeps over the eaves—
Where a dream in the dusk lends a balm to my lot,
While the wind whispers low in the leaves.

There the whip-poor-will calls in a penitent way,
For a punishment none could advise,
And the katy-did solemnly pauses to lay
All her wickedness bare to my eyes.

There I dreamed on an evening of nations and men,
And the burden of care in each heart,—
Of the troubles perplexing humanity, when
I was roused from my chair with a start.

Youthful voices in musical unison joined
Wafted sweetly across the dim lake,—
Swelling tones into mellowest melody coined
Told of love that should never forsake.

And I listened and, somehow, the spirit of gloom
That had saddened my soul passed away,—
Passed away and there rose, like a lily in bloom,
Fragrant hope of the ultimate day—

Of the day when all mankind, eternally young
By the grace of the Father above,
Shall rejoice in the harp of existence full strung
With the quivering fibers of love.

O, the youth that is past like the breath of the wind!
O, the love that steals into the heart
Ere the crosses of life leave their shadows behind!—
Why—why must their glory depart?

JUST AN HOUR OF FUN.

What the soul o' man needs is an hour of fun,
So we fiddle and sing when our labor is done;
And we'd dance if our knees were limber as when
We went straying with Mary and Jennie and Ben.

O, we'll fiddle and sing
Till the old house'll ring,
And the pleasures we lack the old fiddle'll bring.

All the flowers were fair in those happy old days,
When Sage Lydia led us in botany's ways.
Ah! the games that Dan Cupid puts up on young men!—
It is botany now—it was love-making then.

So we fiddle and sing—
O, we fiddle and sing;
All the dreams left behind the old fiddle'll bring.

We've a short road behind and a long one ahead;
We're but few years alive and we're many years dead,
And there's never a day is so hard or so long
But we finish it up with a jolly old song.

Then we fiddle and sing—
O, we fiddle and sing;
When the old fiddle laughs we're as rich as a king.

IN THE QUIET EVENING.

Before the hearth the boy reclines at ease,
 He stares wide-eyed into the dancing flames.
 Therein appear before him grotesque elves;
 Quaint fairies rise to mock him and he hears
 'The crackling laughter of the merry sprites
 The fire releases from the blazing log.

'The lassie tucks her dollies snugly in—
 The black-eyed Susan; Jane, her first delight;
 Repeats beside their bed her evening prayer,
 Bestows on each a fond maternal kiss,
 Commending them to sleep and pleasant dreams;
 Then, book in hand, pursues grey learning's path.

Domestic duties done, the mother scans
 Her favorite journal; studies modes of dress;
 Perchance recites a pleasing bit of song
 Selected from the page the poets claim;
 Or, pausing, idly strokes the arching neck
 Of Tabitha, who purrs her grateful thanks.

Back in a shadowed corner of the room
 The gran'ther tells the father how they won
 With Grant at Shiloh on the second day;
 And how a wave of pity swept the ranks
 When Halleck (under orders, as he thinks)
 Bade Grant relinquish what he'd hardly gained.

"Poor Will!" the old man sighs. Two tears roll down
 The mingled furrows on his wrinkled cheeks;
 His thoughts are with the brother of his heart,

Who slumbers through the swift and silent years,
A nameless soldier in an unknown grave.

Shall they e'er meet again? God only knows.

Of such is life—the simple life I love;

The budding boy aflame with fancy's thrill;
The lassie learning care beside her dolls;

The gentle wife, wise guardian of us all;
The good old man, preserved by kindly fate
To fit past learning to the present need.

ARMENIA.

A sultan sat on a crumbling throne—
And the Christian kings took stock of his lands.

The sultan's troops slashed right and left
With sword and dagger. A Christian fell
At every sweep of a pagan blade.

Old England's long, slim fingers curled
Lovingly over the sultan's gold.

The sultan's soldiers snatched wee babes
From mothers' breasts and dashed their brains
Ferociously out on the frozen earth.

Austria, Germany, Russia, France,
Saw and were silent. The sultan sneered.

Where maids and matrons shrieking ran,
The sultan's hirelings struck them down
And ravished and slew them where they lay.

The word passed over the shuddering earth,
But never a nation raised its hand.

God! for a year of the brave old days
When Christian sword smote pagan lance,
Swung by the knight of the snow-white cross!

January, 1896.

THE CORN-SILK CIGARETTE.

When autumn dries the field corn's fleece
 And browns its waving blade;
 When all the trees in brilliant cloaks
 Are handsomely arrayed,
 And summer's parting messages
 Inspire a vague regret—
 'Tis then the rural youth enjoys
 The corn-silk cigarette.

The brittle filler vents no fumes
 To foul the fragrant air;
 The yellow husk he wraps about
 With quick but loving care
 Exhales no opiate odors—
 No foreign scents, but yet
 He smokes with all a sultan's pride
 His corn-silk cigarette.

He has, perhaps, attained the calm
 And serious age of ten,
 Wherefore he sits and meditates
 The destiny of men;
 Betimes to younger comrades tells
 Adventures he has met,
 What while for each he deftly rolls
 A corn-silk cigarette.

He recollects a city boy
 Who came to see the Grays,
 And who (until he licked him)
 Besought in various ways

To prove the pale, ill-smelling tubes
 He sent back home to get,
 Were finer far than any form
 Of granger cigarette.

* * * * *

How now, my pipe—what trick is this?
 Your soothing savor's gone;
 Is it eclipsed by subtler scents
 From memory's garden drawn?
 Ah! well, I grant you're ill-equipped
 To pay the heavy debt
 Incurred by your progenitor—
 The corn-silk cigarette.

IN THE OPEN AIR.

Awheel and away from the smoky town,
To the country-side, where the earth blooms fair;
From the fiery ways where the sun beats down,
For a bracing run in the open air.

Spring into the saddle with feverish haste,
Keen joy in the heart and a laugh for care;
Away where the branches are interlaced
With the glorious blue of the open air.

The soul grows lean in the narrow streets;
The spirit harkens to grim despair.
Awheel and away where the rarest sweets
Scent every breath of the open air.

The soul shall expand and the heart grow light
In the distant lane where the city's blare
Is lost like a phantom of vanished night.
Awheel and away to the open air!

ADDRESS TO CEDAR RIVER.

Old Cedar, by your shady pools
 Where minnows hide and pickerels follow,
 A truant from the stifling schools,
 As fancy free as thrush or swallow—
 What happy hours have I reclined,
 A shy, day-dreaming lad, to ponder
 Upon the mysteries I might find
 Within the cloud-topped woods off yonder.

The squirrel, darting up his tree,
 I saw but dimly in my dreaming;
 Your placid waters, rolling free,
 A mighty sea were, to my seeming;
 Each gold-lipped lily near your marge,
 'Twixt wind and current lightly swaying,
 Became a splendid royal barge,
 Whereon were elves and pixies playing.

What giants lurked beside your brim,
 Or met by chance in fierce contention
 In that far forest, dark and grim,
 I knew them well—but dared not mention.
 For men are dull and credit naught
 Not based upon material chances,
 And e'en the puling babes have caught
 The tendency to sneer at fancies.

When my boy comes of proper age,
 He'll have no legend-killing teacher,
 Nor any use for printed page,

But you shall be his book and preacher.
So shall you, whispering where he plays,
With many a pleasing secret store him,
And lead his thoughts in flowery ways
As you do mine and did before him.

THE SINGER SLEEPS.

Lines written on the death of Eugene Field.

The magic pen is rusting, and the page
 Awaits a touch that it shall never know.
The gentle hands are folded on his breast;
 The shadowed chamber somber silence keeps;
Tread soft without, speak low—the singer sleeps.
 Fair fall what dreams illuminate his rest,
The chosen friend of childhood and the sage,
 Through all the tireless years that come and go;
And in God's time be his the tender joy
 To be awakened by a Lyttel Boy.

POESY PAST AND PRESENT.

From the earliest ages the poets' complaints
 Of the harshness of fate have appealed to men's ears;
 Old Homer, blind wanderer, first of the saints,
 Had woes that come quavering down through the
 years.

His patrons grew shy and decided in turn
 That he might be all right—and undoubtedly was—
 But so far as it seemed they had money to burn,
 They preferred to ignite it in some other cause.

Noll Goldsmith, whom Providence gave to the race
 As an offset for Lissoy, laid low by a lord—
 He sang like a seraph, but never gained grace
 With the men in whose vaults British guineas were
 stored.

Poor, dreaming, impractical, idolized Burns,
 With the soul of a prince and the purse of a clod;
 Confronted by want wheresoever he turns
 And glad at the last to go under the sod!

Proud Poe, what a pitiful story was thine!
 Most gifted of geniuses, jealousy drags
 Your fame through the gutter (a vengeance malign)
 Who wrote like a demigod—perished in rags!

Thank God we can turn in relief from the past,
 With its bust of starved genius erect in each niche,
 For the triumph of song is accomplished at last—
 We have millions of poets, and all of 'em rich.

TO A MOUSE IN A TRAP.

Poor, trembling wretch, what sad mishap
Has brought you tight within my trap?
Had man's vile greed so clean bereft
Your bairnies that you'd stoop to theft?
Ah, who'd not lay his scruples by
That heard his babies' hungered cry?

Still, though to mercy I incline,
Must I the ends of law resign?
The crust you sought full well you knew
Belonged to me and not to you.
But—peace! I'll grant your frenzied plea,
Move back the bars and set you free.

If man one God-like spark can claim,
'Then surely mercy is its name.
So, though you meant to steal my bread,
I'll spend no anger on your head,
But, warmed by gentle mercy's flame,
I'll let you go as poor's you came.

As poor's you came, yet richer far
By freedom's gift than now you are.
Your life's to me of little worth—
To you the grandest fact of earth;
So now, whilst I throw wide my door,
Begone, wee neighbor—sin no more!

A SUMMER DAY.

Whilere the sun hath risen from the sea
 The cock's alarum wakes the sleeping farm.
 The good wife riseth and the sluggish boys
 Turn, grumbling mildly, from their downy couch.
 Beyond the lane, snug under willows housed,
 The heavy cattle stand and 'gin to graze;
 The horses whinny shrilly in their stalls;
 Mine old friend Tray stalks stiffly from his hut;
 The eager swine proclaim the coming day
 By calling loudly for their meed of corn.
 The monarch sun, ere that he comes to view,
 Hath paled and purpled all the eastern arch;
 He drives the stars, night's sentinels, from the sky,
 And last their queen, fair Luna, doth depose.
 Again, what while I drive toward the field,
 Ariseth to the cloudless dome of blue
 The ancient rooster's "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

My wagon rumbles past the osage hedge,
 And past the pond whose banks blue lilies fringe;
 I note the drops of dew, which, like fair gems,
 Do sparkle on their petals; and I see
 Where, near the farther shore, a wild duck feeds.
 A rising gentle breeze doth stir the flags
 And toss with airy grace the corn's green plumes.
 The sun's bright rays do heat the placid air
 Until the world seems wrapped in waves of light.
 Whiles to and fro my horses draw the plow
 Betimes a rabbit darts across my path;
 Or Master Squirrel cocks his pretty head

And gazeth slyly on me ere he turns,
Evanishing as stilly as he came.
The sun sails upward to the middle day;
I crave a cooling flagon from the well,
When calls across the fields the welcome bell.

When wife and I and our two sturdy sons
Are seated at the plain, but bounteous board,
I ask God's grace upon our food, our toil—
Beseeching Him that He will give us peace
What while we live, and in the end will close
Our days in hope to bide with him for aye.
The noon time passes quickly and I go
Back 'midst the corn and labor till the eve.
When that the shadows slant athwart the earth,
And Sol doth sink into the western sea,
I leave the plow and turn my team toward home.
The evening meal dispatched, our boys depart
To call upon the neighbor youths hard by.
The stars return to watch throughout the night,
And she, their queen, resumes her wonted throne.
Thus, while she floods in radiance all the land,
My wife and I sit silent, hand in hand.

SINNING AND REPENTING.

The dull routine of daily life,
It palls upon the best of us;
They find the narrow path too tame—
And jump it like the rest of us.

Old Adam's taint that stirs the blood
Demands a roaring hour of us;
We know it's wrong, but to deny
Its plea's beyond the power of us.

So off we flit, with happy hearts
To where inspiring spirits be;
We laugh and sing and swap old yarns
With e'er increasing gayety.

Braw Bobby weaves a fearsome tale
Of mysteries all new to us,
While Tommy's artful tongue unfolds
Full many a pleasing view to us.

'Twixt pipe and bowl our joy ascends,
But sad, O, sad's the fall of us,
When, wandering home at break of day,
Reproaches welcome all of us.

With tears and with a lecture keen
The good wife stirs the soul in us,
Till we resolve henceforth to tread
No path but that of holiness.

NIGHT AND DAY.

Whenas my clay
Slumbereth from the day
My soul goes out where ransomed spirits play.

The clock within the tower
Tolls midnight's hour
As swift I fly past forest, field and flower.

Joy!—joy to flee
From that which burthens me,—
To be from all its ills and crosses free.

The weary day
Too long—too long doth stay,
But like love's hour the night doth speed away.

THE BABIES' TANDEM TOUR.

Fair Helen holds the handle-bars—her happy daddy's hands;

The laddie, perched behind her, it would do you good to see.

Then off they go a-touring through many foreign lands
Upon the family tandem, viz.: your humble servant's knee.

Through By-Low Town and Cradle Cove they leisurely proceed;

They view the pleasant scenery, they hear the local lore—

How giants thrill these quiet spots with many an awful deed;

How fairies all the playthings of the sleeping babes explore.

From time to time a robber band appears on either side;

In husky tones they hail us from a thicket or a glen.
And gracious me! you ought to see the fearful pace we ride;

Not even Mr. Zimmerman could travel with us then.

The roads we know are always smooth, as roads should always be,

The places that we visit we have visited before;
But that is no objection, as you easily could see,
If you should hear the tandem team appeal to me
for more.

When we have wheeled past villages and cottages and
farms,

We stop at last beside a fence to watch some funny
sheep;

Then Paul's eyes close and he falls off into his mother's
arms,

While Helen drops the handle-bars and cuddles up
to sleep.

AN HOUR OF REST.

The autumn chill is on the breath of morning;
The autumn winds sweep gustily along;
Too soon within the forest's gay adorning
Will rise the lingering singer's farewell song.

The goldenrod is fading from the highways;
The latest woodland blossoms disappear;
Dead leaves drift down and strew the rural byways;
The hush of Nature's hour of rest is here.

An hour of rest and quiet; of reflection;
Of pure content with labors nobly done;
Of gratefulness and solemn introspection,
While through Time's glass the last sands slowly
run.

Old age comes so to them that in life's morning
With willing hearts heed rigid Duty's call;
God grants with love, their peaceful homes adorning,
An hour of rest before the end of all.

THE ARGOSIES OF JUNE.

Books lose their pleasing power
 When fairer scenes invite;
 I toast June's sweetest flower—
 The graduate in white.

Upon the toiling myriads
 I calmly turn my back,
 To drink his honeyed periods—
 The graduate in black.

Each bears a cure unfailing
 For all our earthly ills;
 Each "argosy goes sailing"—
 And father pays the bills.

Their mother sits a-smiling,
 And little brother grins
 As each, with words beguiling,
 The "broader life" begins;

While I sit back a-dreaming
 Of other happy days,
 When other children, beaming,
 Received the public's praise.

Wherever have they vanished—
 To what untoward clime?—
 By what misfortune banished,
 Who should have shone sublime?

I fear that Fate, unfeeling,
 Has forced some to the wall,

Has scoffed at their appealing
And gloried in their fall;

That many a bold beginner
In life's eventful ride
Has made a hasty dinner
For the hideous monster, Pride;

That others, gayly faring
With Pleasure, as they rode,
Have found him change his bearing—
No longer lead, but goad.

Some, mayhap, let Ambition
Deceive more cautious Fear
And shriveled by attrition
With sterner bodies near.

Ah! well, there's no use grieving
Before dark days come in—
Time brings his undeceiving
Whether you lose or win.

So, then, away out yonder,
Beyond the sunset land,
Let each one gladly wander
With Fancy, hand in hand.

1896—June.

THE MAN WHO WILL.

Though lowly born and humbly bred
In Poverty's dominion,
The man who will may rear his head—
Onward and upward may he tread,
Despite adverse opinion.

If tricky Fortune seem to smile
On many another brighter,
The man on whom she spends no wile
Should quicker pass each weary mile—
His knapsack's all the lighter.

With naught to woo his steadfast will
Astray from his ambition,
Sooner should he ascend the hill,
Prepared to win and ably fill
The coveted position.

Let none lament that Fate declined
With plenteous gifts to store him;
The man who will may leave behind
The clay he was and some time find
Life's joyance spread before him.

POVERTY'S CHILDREN.

Some time, when the Wandering Jew comes around,
We shall borrow a part of his treasures of gold;
Then we'll charter the Charity, fairest of ships,
And set off on the longest and rarest of trips.
When we've crowded the uttermost nooks in the hold
With the daintiest sweets to be anywhere found,
And the loveliest toys that the world can afford,
We shall take all of Poverty's children aboard.
Then when breezes blow fairly and breezes blow strong,
We shall sail down to sea with a jolly old song.
O, the babes of the poor, with the sorrowful eyes,
Where the fingers of Want have imprinted their sign—
I know what wee playthings you long for and lack;
How the little eyes see and the little hearts crave;
And I know how sad tears wet the mother's pale cheeks
While she stills on her bosom the little one's sighs.
Be patient, O children, be patient and brave—
God loves you—God loves you. And some time, my
dears,
Some time, when we've waited through all the long
years—
When we've patiently waited in hunger and cold,
He will send us the Jew with the treasures of gold.

THE GLOOMY DAY.

Sort of a shivery, showery day;
 No occasion to smile—
 There is nothing worth while;
Sky lowers down in a smothery way.

People all ugly, or seemingly so;
 Make talk to your neighbor
 And get for your labor
A sulky, short "yes," or a short, sulky "no."

Kind of a day when you sit and feel blue,
 While suspicions creep in
 Of your friends or your kin,
Or of anyone else who is probably true.

But, somehow or other, your thoughts wander off
 To a pleasant old time
 When the world ran in rhyme,
And you lose your desire to cavil or scoff.

You think of the lassie you won for a bride,
 And the laughter and tears
 Of the subsequent years,
When—hallo! there, it seems to be brighter outside!

The clouds of despondency speedily part;
 Your suspicions take flight—
 The old world is all right!—
For the sunshine of love is at work in your heart.

TIME, THE PHYSICIAN.

Have done with idle lamentations—
This rule holds true of men and nations:

For all the ills that they endure,
Until the last, Time has a cure;

And when the last the spirit humbles,
Nor man nor nation ever grumbles.

HOPE.

Divine the gift the Father last bestowed—
Hope's beacon bright that lightens all life's road.

In every grief its gentle ray descends,
For every bitter sorrow makes amends;

Uplifts the soul and points the forward way,
Where Peace awaits to crown a better day.

The homeless wretch that on the moorland lies
And shrinks abashed from curious human eyes,

His vision seeks the vaulted fields afar,
And he reads hope in yon benignant star.

Wherever men, beneath oppression's rod,
With bleeding hearts reproach a passive God,

He bids them gaze upon the beacon fair
And read the inspired message written there:

"On! on! and ever on!" The sinking soul
Regains its strength and seeks again the goal.

Doubt's shadow fades, fears vanish, cares depart
When seraph Hope renews the fainting heart.

Shine on, O Star, a boon to mortal sight,
Hope's promise tracing on the walls of night;

Still lead us on—our stumbling footsteps guide,
Until at last we reach the Father's side.

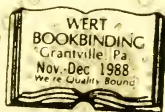
THE END OF IT ALL.

Ah! the end of it all—
 Of this life that we live;
 Of the blows that we get
 And the blows that we give;
 Of the joys and the griefs
 That to each of us fall—
 Blind humanity dreams
 Of the end of it all.

The lover who yearns
 For affection denied;
 The prince in his hall
 And the pauper outside;
 The parent whose darling
 Lies under the pall—
 Each mournfully dreams
 Of the end of it all.

Since God in His love
 For His children denies
 This glimpse of the end
 To humanity's eyes,
 Let each bravely answer
 Life's manifest call,
 And rely on the Lord
 For the end of it all.





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